GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1185
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2017
Welfare of Workforce
Ahlawat Smt. Santosh;Saraswati Shri Sumedhanand

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a)whether it is a fact that the Government has taken a number of path breaking steps for the welfare of the country's workforce and if so, the details thereof;
(b)the major achievements of ESIC during the last three years; and
(c)whether any post retirement benefits are being provided to the workers and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (IC) FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
(SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA)

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. Ministry of Labour and Employment has, in the recent past, taken a number of measures for the welfare of workforce in the country. Some of the major reforms taken by the Ministry are as follow:-

i) The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 came into force on 1st September 2016. The Act ensures complete ban on employment below the age of 14 years. Child Labour is now a cognizable offence.

ii) The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 came into force on 1st April, 2017. This ensures increased Maternity Benefit from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for two surviving children and 12 weeks for more than two children, Commissioning Mothers and Adopting Mothers.

Contd..2/-

iii) Amendment to the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 enables the employers to pay the wages to their employees by cash or cheque or crediting it to their bank account.

iv) Enhancement of eligibility limit under Payment of Bonus Act from Rs.10,000/- per month to Rs.21,000/- per month. Calculation Ceiling revised from Rs.3500/- to Rs.7000/- or the minimum wage for the scheduled employment, as fixed by the appropriate Government, whichever is higher.

v) The Employees' Compensation Act,1923 amended to make it more rational and labourers' beneficial.

vi) The Government has increased the basic rate of minimum wages for all sectors in the central sphere.

vii) A single unified Web Portal for submissions of Common Annual Return under 9 Central Acts and monthly common Electronic Challan Cum Return (ECR) for EPFO and ESIC. Common registration under EPFO and ESIC has been facilitated on the Shram Suvidha Portal since 30th April, 2017.

viii) Minimum pension under Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 has been revised to Rs.1000/- in perpetuity per month w.e.f. April, 2015.

ix) Time limit for claim settlement has been reduced to 10 days from 20 days.

x) EPFO has tied up with more than 2 lakh CSC (Common Service Centers) outlets for various services including Jeevan Pramaan.

xi) Benefits under Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme, 1976 has been increased from Rs.3.60 lakhs to Rs.6.00 lakhs in case of death of EPFO member. Employers can apply for EPF code numbers online by uploading of digitally signed documents.

xii) Universal Account Number (UAN) has been made compulsory and online credit system introduced.

xiii) Employees' Enrolment Campaign (EEC) was launched by the Government in January 2017. The EEC aims to enroll left out employees and provides incentives to employers in the form of waiver of administrative charges.
Contd..3/-

xiv) Wage ceiling for coverage under ESI Act, 1948 has been increased from Rs. 15000/- to Rs.21000/- w.e.f. 1st January, 2017.

xv) For workers covered under ESI Act, 1948 maternity leave increased from existing 12 weeks to 26 weeks. Provision of maternity benefits also extended to commissioning & adopting mothers.

xvi) ESIC 2.0 initiative on digitization of health records, online availability of medical reports, Abhiyaan Indradhanush, Tele-Medicine facility and Geo-tagging of ESIC hospitals etc.

xvii) Expansion of ESIC to cover complete districts in all 393 districts where these clusters are located.

xvii) Other major reforms of ESIC are- opening of 6 bedded Day Care Centres, Annual Preventive Health Check-up for Insured Persons (IPs) of age 40 years, increase per capita ceiling on expenditure from Rs.2150/- to Rs.3000/-.

xviii) To extend the coverage to the entire workforce, ESI Corporation has introduced a new employer friendly Scheme for left out employers and workers including contractual, casual, temporary workers. As a result more than one crore new employees added.

(c): The workers are provided post-retirement benefits like gratuity, pension and provident fund under the provisions of the Payment of Gratuity Act,1972 and Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions, Act,1952.
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